

Exposed

JRC fotocineclub's journal
Vol. 6, December 2020

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Editorial

Dear photo friends,

here it is, our new number of Exposed. It is exciting to present all the stunning work of our members in a beautiful journal. I hope this will motivate many of you to think about photographic stories you wish to tell and share.

Look at the opposite image; it talks in a wonderful way about the concentration of this young boy, his control of the horse and it even talks about his life. At the same time not too much is shown, thus leaving space for the viewer's fantasy. The composition is spot-on too; all elements you see contribute to the story and are well placed!

Before you go out or travel next time, you could contemplate about your intent, the story and the planned compositions beforehand. Please remember what Ansel Adams used to say: "I see lots of sharp photos with fuzzy concepts".

The intent with which you begin to photograph your story should consistently shine through your sequence of photos. Thus, the making of your images and your editing should be consistent, avoiding the helter-skelter of a mixed bag of snaps. Consider sitting in a classical concert and in the left back corner someone is playing modern music on his phone and in another place two people are talking loudly. It spoils the event, whatever excuse could be invented. Thus, make sure all elements in your image contribute to what you want to say.

Wishing you festive days and lots of happiness!

Rudolf



Lisbon
Katja Neugebauer

of one of the famous yellow trams coming down a hill but possibilities are endless. You will need a picture of people at play or people at work. And relationships. Maybe an environmental portrait. So each day was dedicated to one of these elements. Apart from the first day, which was really about practising the basics (rule of thirds, rule of odds). It is amazing how difficult it can be to get this right and how easily you start cursing people that come walking into a frame and thereby bring the number of elements from a beautiful three to an annoying four. Patience had never been my strongest suit and while it will probably never be, I mastered the art of waiting in the same spot for 30 minutes or more in order to get the shot that I wanted.

Lisbon is hot in the summer, and so we spent some time before and after lunch reviewing and discussing our pictures. It was interesting to see the different approaches to the same topic, sometimes in exactly the same place and with exactly the same scene. We spent most of the time in Lisbon, shooting in iconic quarters like Alfama or Mouraria. However,



the last day of shooting was a real treat, as we spent the morning in Cacilhas, a small former fishing town located on the other side of the river Tejo, and then went to Cascais with its splendid beaches in the afternoon. This provided us with plenty of opportunities for interesting and colourful pictures, making the most of the morning as well as early-evening sun.

The last day was all about selecting, post-processing and sequencing our pictures. Given that we had pictures from four full days of shooting, we could only select a few of our favourites. The rest is still patiently waiting on an external hard drive.

The workshop was a great experience. Sure, there were moments, when nothing seemed to work (or so was my perception). Then Jorge and José would be there for a pep talk, giving advice, or coming along to look for a good spot with me. I feel that my approach to photography has changed for the better (no uncontrolled shooting from the hip anymore). I take pictures much more consciously now, composing, looking for interesting colour combinations and light.





black+white people

Photography as a story retains not objective reality but the deception of reality with the interiority of the photographer (Giuseppe Cavalli)

The reason I bought my first reflex in 1981 was because a friend of mine had informed me of a special price for the purchase of a CANON AT 1, a semi-automatic camera. I was definitely not a photography enthusiast, and until then I had used a very simple KODAK INSTAMATIC for my home images.

Once I had a real camera in my hand, I began to realise the charm of photography and to understand the value of the image. But it was only when I went into the Foto Club 's dark room that I started to love the magical world of photography.

I can't say how many hours I spent in that dark and somewhat claustrophobic place but that time is an essential part of my life experience. During the long attendance in the Club there was not a moment when I considered myself a "photographer" in the true sense of the word. I never seriously studied the photographic technique and my photography has always been "instinctive" with the strengths and weaknesses that this involves. My school, if you call it in this way, was attending exhibitions of great photographers whose ability and sensitivity in capturing people, places and details I admired.

The use of black and white has always fascinated me much more than colour because, in my opinion, the images can acquire more intensity playing with contrasts and geometries.

I've always liked portraits of people because behind every person photographed there is, as the famous photographer Mario Giacomelli said, the mood and the feeling of the photographer at that time.

The moment the photo is taken becomes eternal, possibly without the protagonist ever knowing.

The photos you can see here have captured a moment in the life of people; looking at them takes me back to that distant time and makes me feel better...

Roberto Tilio



My mother 1986

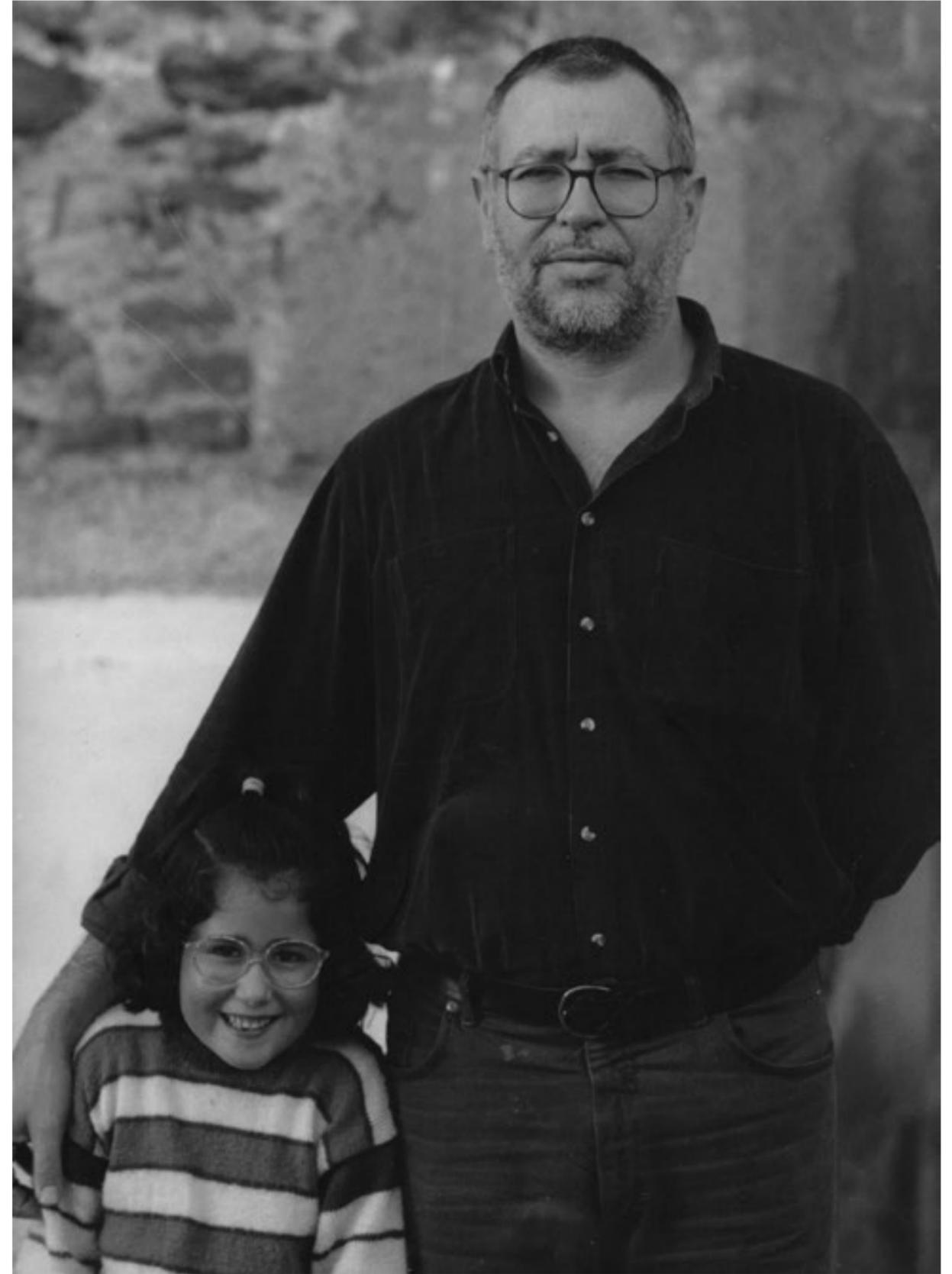
While she was busy mending my sock, just like she did when I was a child, I called her and she looked up at me.



Parami 1986
I really like this double image. A Bangladeshi girl who initially covers herself shamefully but then relaxes.



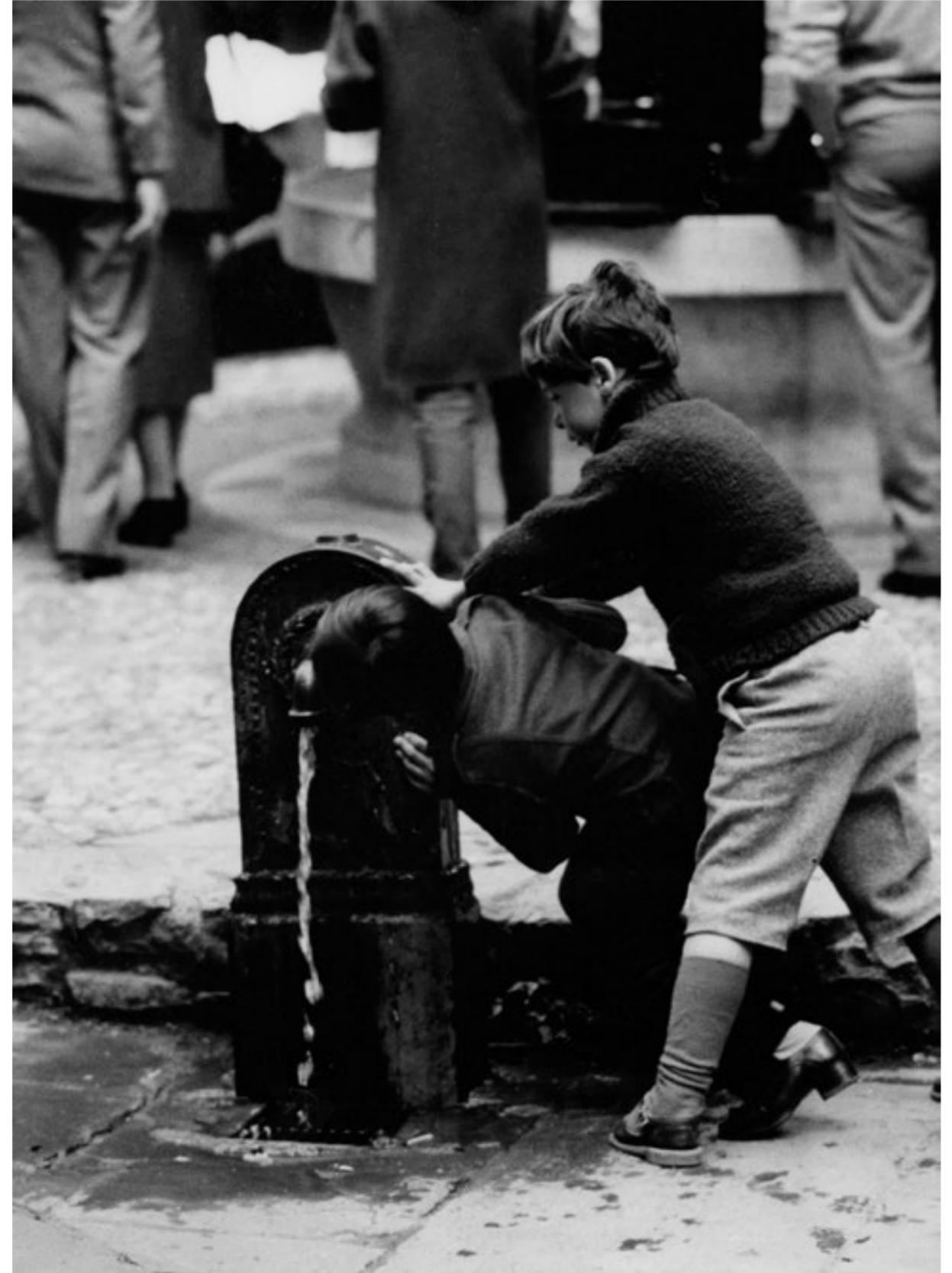
*My aunt Linda 1982
She was my dearest aunt; she had been a widow for several years but continued to cultivate the field with incredible energy.
She had a great love for us, that pure and genuine peasant love.*



*Extremadura (Spain) 1994
Two people, a man and a girl. He is big and serious, she is small and smiling, two distinct but complementary characters.*



Michael 1987
He is the son of my dearest friend Fritz, a friendly and nice German person. Now Michael is a man, he has a life of his own and perhaps he will not remember this moment immortalised in this photo.



Bergamo 1983
These two children, who seem to come out of a photo by Cartier Bresson, were fighting over a sip of water. A photo of the past that they, the protagonists, will never know...

meet our members

Konstantinos



I started taking pictures as a child. I experimented with my uncle's film cameras (including a Voigtlander Prontor Lux). My uncle was a University Professor of topography and he had a passion for travel photography. As a child, I remember buying disposable film and 110 film cameras. Me posing with a camera in front of my father's Alfa Romeo Giulia Gt 1750 car is among my favourite photos of myself ever.

At the age of 14 I bought my first "serious" SLR (a state-of-the-art Minolta AF model) and I built a system around it. I used to develop (B&W) film in the bathroom, which I transformed in a dark room (to my mother's joy). I experimented a lot with Ilford XP1 400 ISO films back in the days. My second round of "serious" photo shootings took place between 2006 and 2010, when I bought a Canon DSLR and quite a few lenses. Back in the days, Canon was the big name in sensor design, and my 10 Mpx 40D managed up to 1600 ISO night shots. In 2009 I opened my Flickr account, and the same year I bought an underwater camera and an Olympus Pen 4/3 camera.



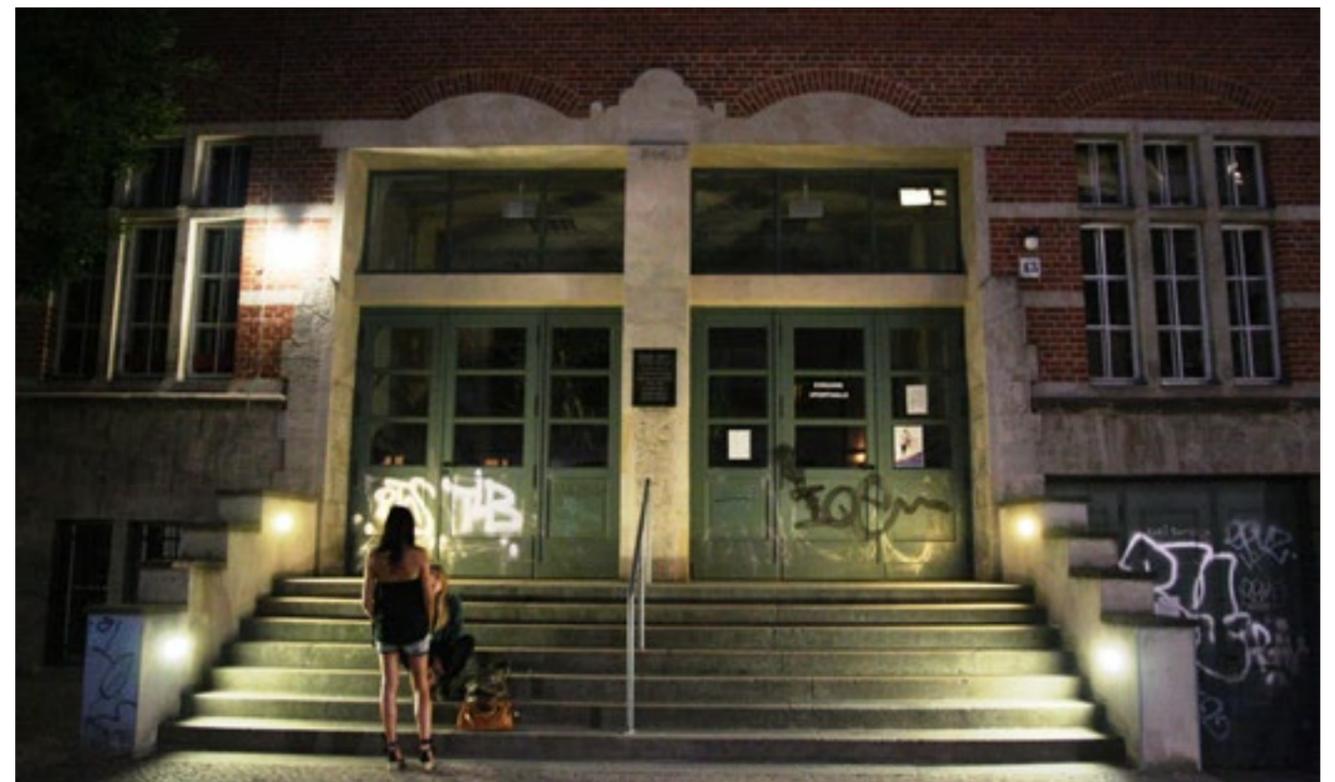
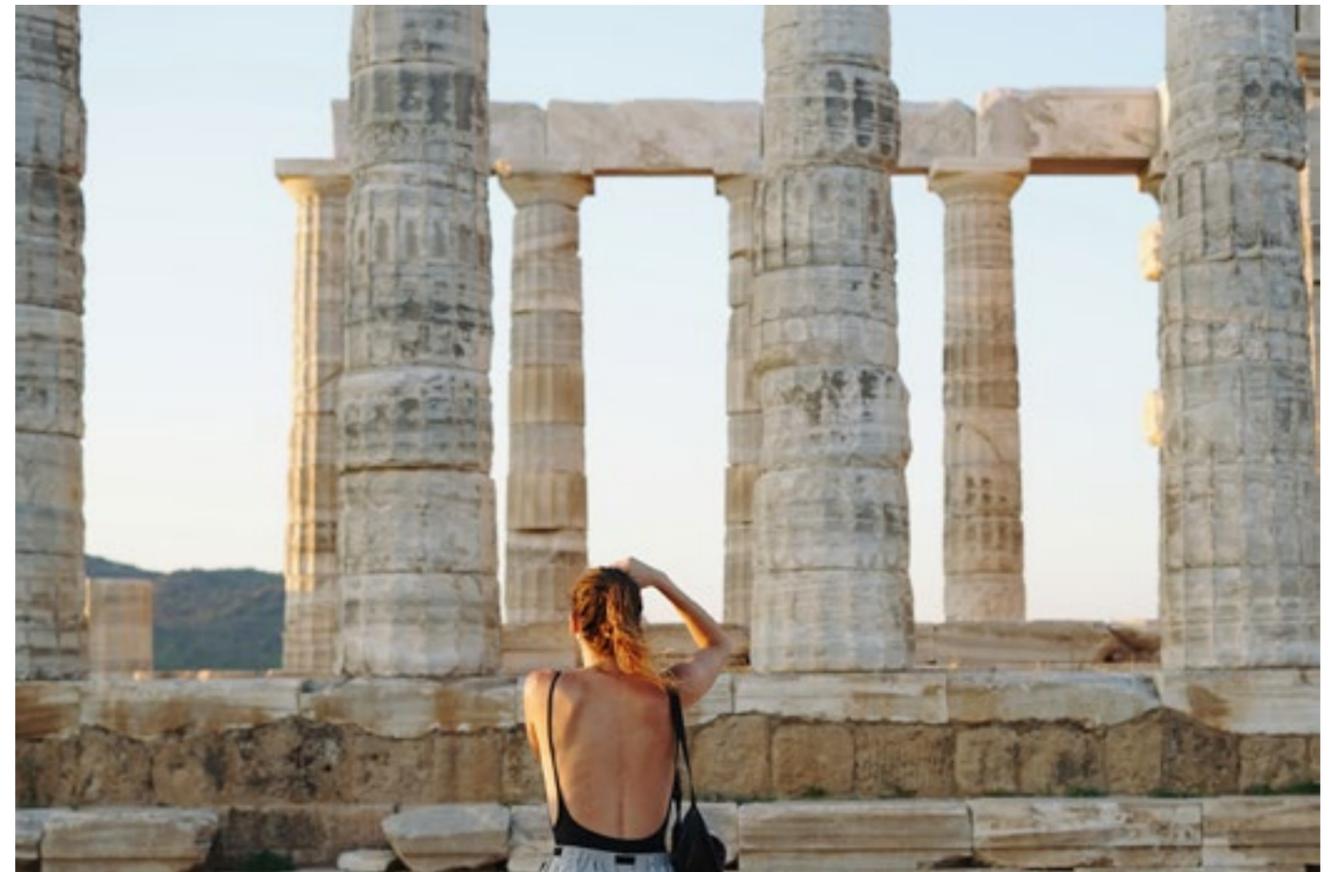
The 70's:
taking the profession seriously since the early days

The final (and current) round of photo shootings started in 2015 with a Sony A7 mirrorless system. Before that, on December 2011 I was introduced to Tumblr and Instagram. Since then, I post regularly on both.

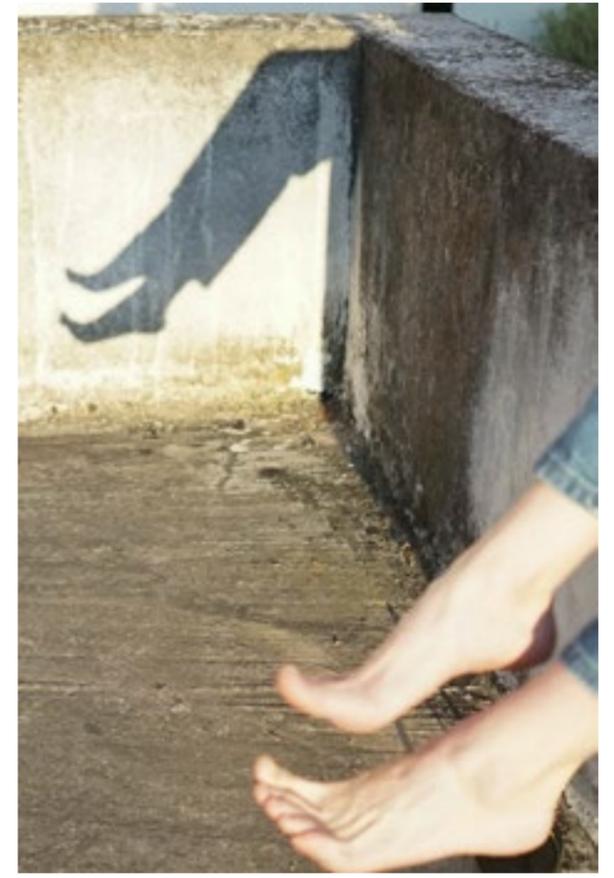
I am self-taught and mostly influenced from friends and fellow photographers also present on social media. I shoot all kinds of photography, except macro and animals. Yeah, about that last one: Teresa and Penelope, the two feral kittens I adopted recently, are making the rounds on Instagram since August 2020.

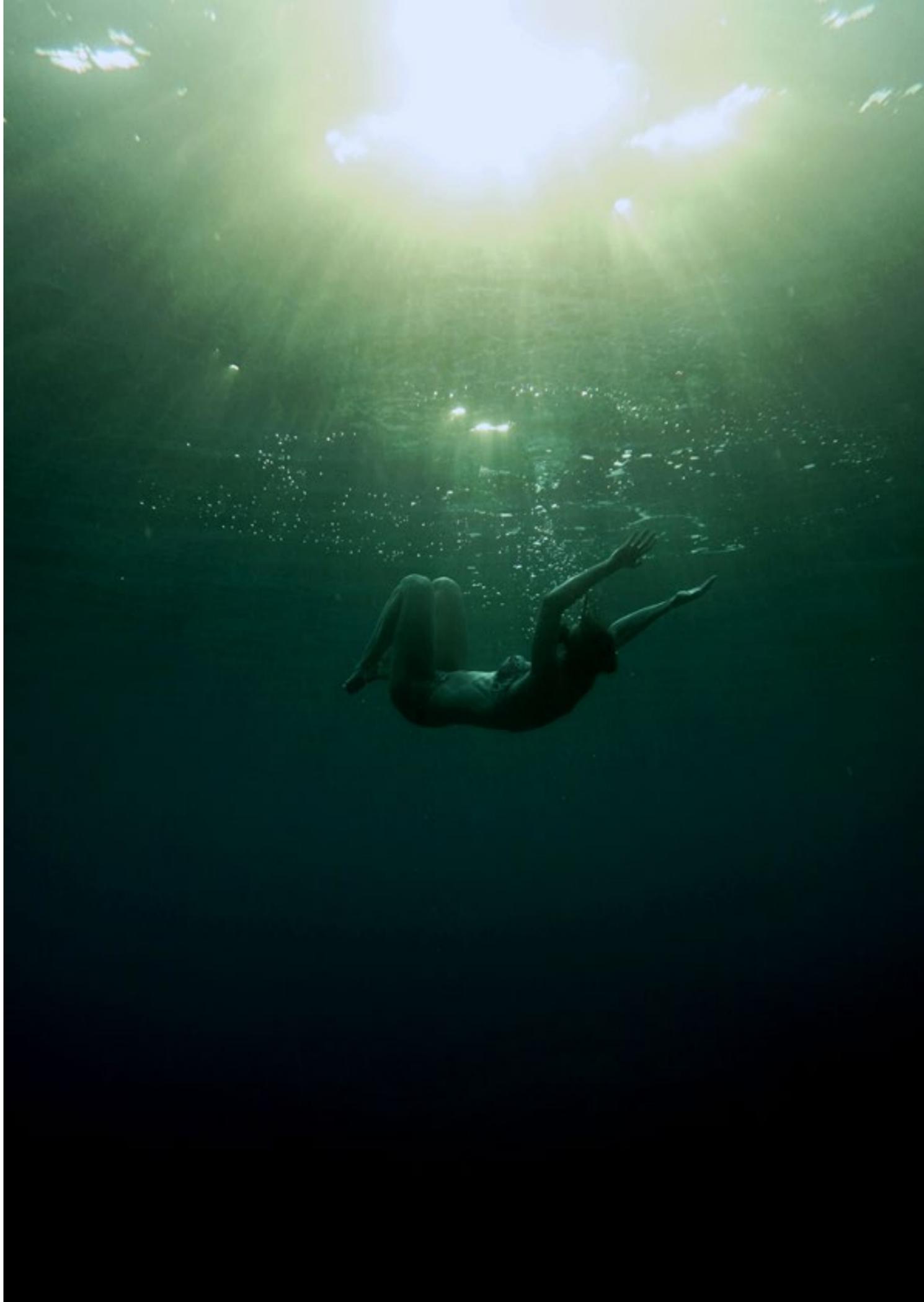
I also enjoy shooting underwater: I am a keen diver, however most of my shots are in the shallows. I really enjoy travel and architecture photography: new topographics (man-altered landscape) is one of my favourite themes. I also enjoy taking photos of my friends and of my father! My themes also include playing with shadows. Finally, I like to attend photo exhibitions while travelling: I visit regularly C/O Berlin, one of my favourite exhibition centres.

Konstantinos Gkoumas









change
contemplation



when we face wilderness,
we face also ourselves.

sometimes it feels like it's
overwhelming.

unshakeable barriers seem
to surround us.

steep obstacles appear
to challenge us.

on the surface, our world
appears to be still.





but given enough time, our perspectives evolve.

being mindful of change, opens us to a sense of freedom.

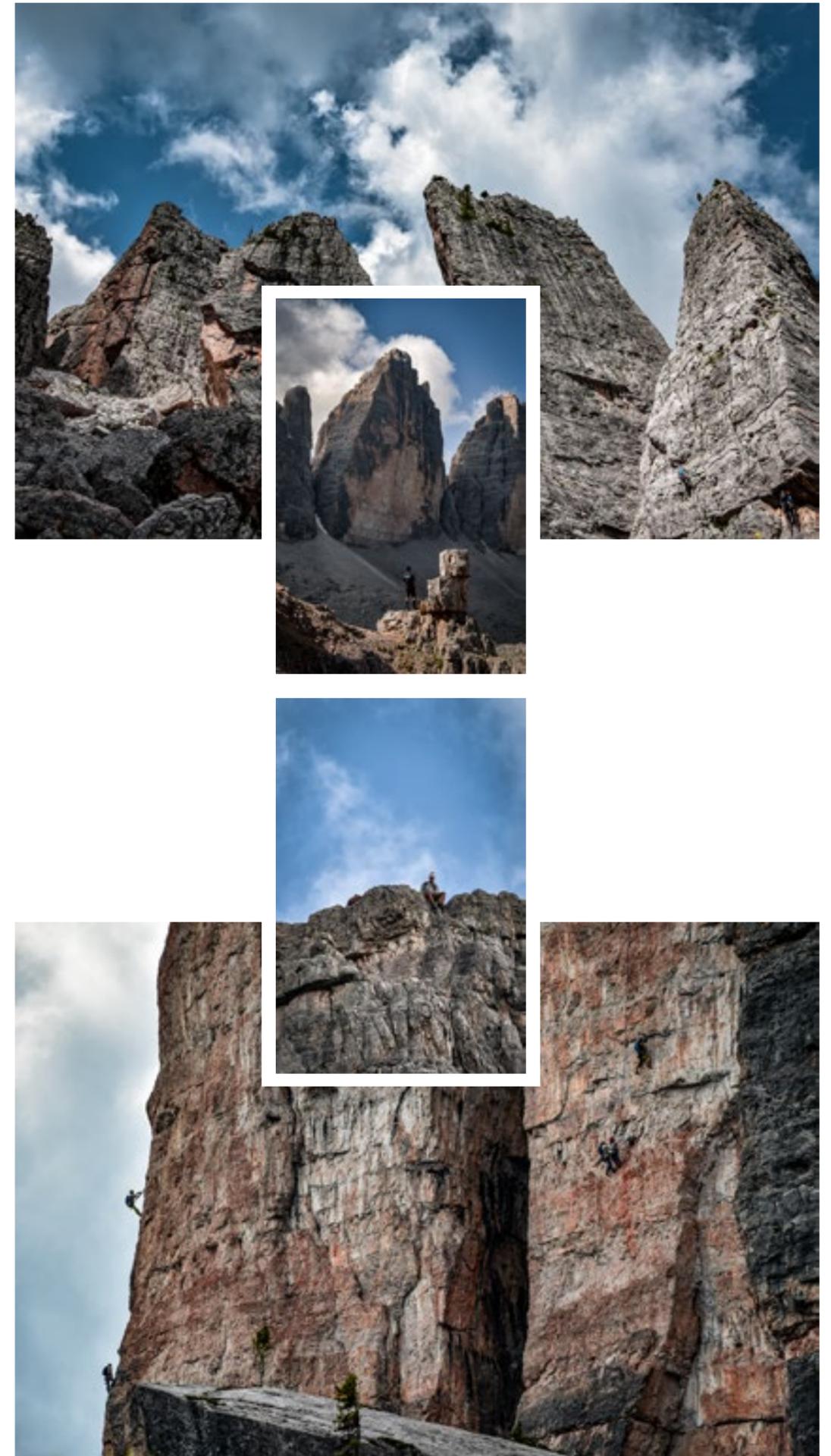
embracing change, supports us in climbing these walls.

new horizons appear, as we rise with our bare hands.

and then change becomes our companion.

it all happens in an instant of sudden realisation.

Andrea Amadei



A photograph of three tall, jagged mountain peaks. The peaks are composed of dark, layered rock, with some reddish-brown hues on the leftmost peak. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. At the base of the mountains, there is a path and a group of hikers. The overall scene is dramatic and majestic.

*discovering
ourselves*

travel

Central Asia: looking for traces of the silk road

Central Asia is a tremendously interesting destination for travellers and photographers alike because of the importance of the ancient silk road. In the old times, crossing central Asia required traveling across very high mountain passes, cutting across some of the highest mountains in the world and then moving from oasis to oasis across drylands.

We moved by car and train; from Uzbekistan we crossed into Tajikistan and the Fergana valley, and

finally in the mountains of Kyrgyzstan. Crossing borders seemed difficult but with the proper preparation and organisation, it turned out to be just fine. We now know that it would be best to have the area travelled in two separate journeys, mostly for climatic reasons. The first part – the drylands – possibly not in the hot months of the year; while the mountains have to be visited in the summer as snow can fall unexpectedly at any time of the year.



The towers, silk road's most frequent landmarks (Burana Tower, Bishkek)



Crossing mountains and drylands remains a challenge also today



Kyrgyzstan is a trekking paradise, best on horseback



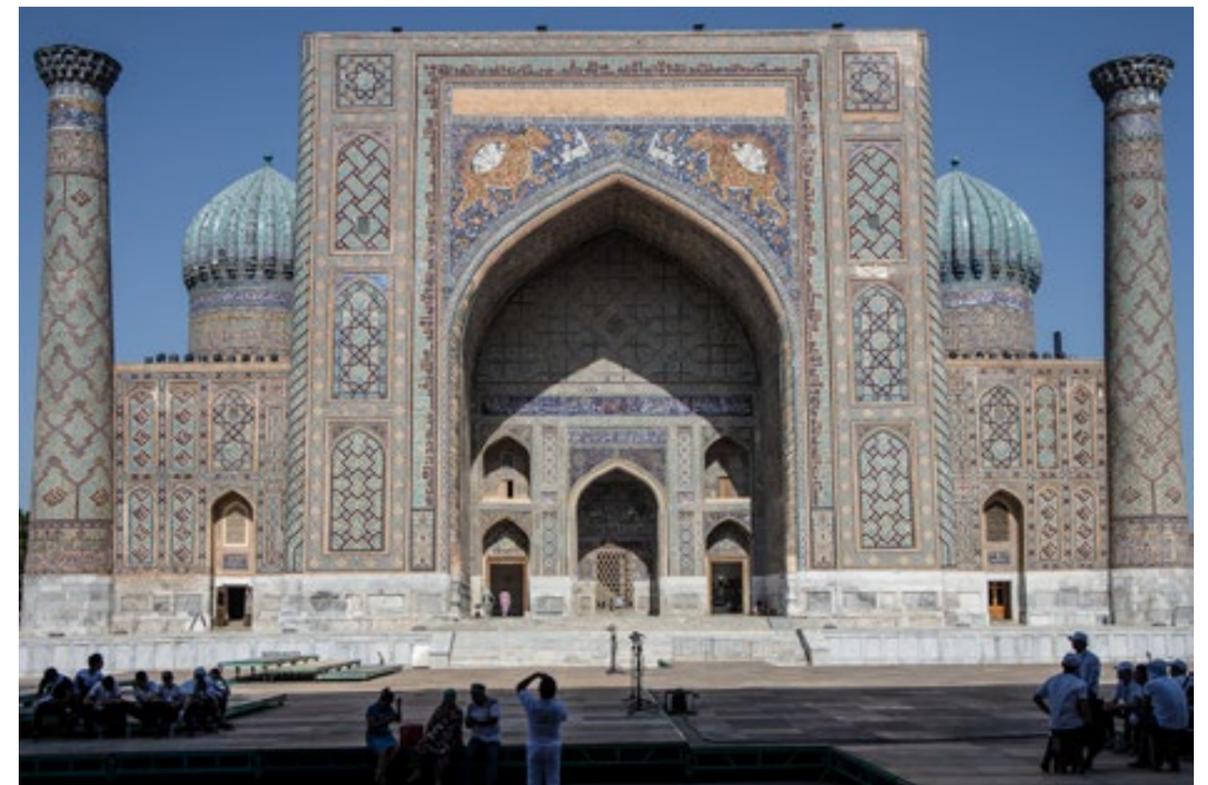
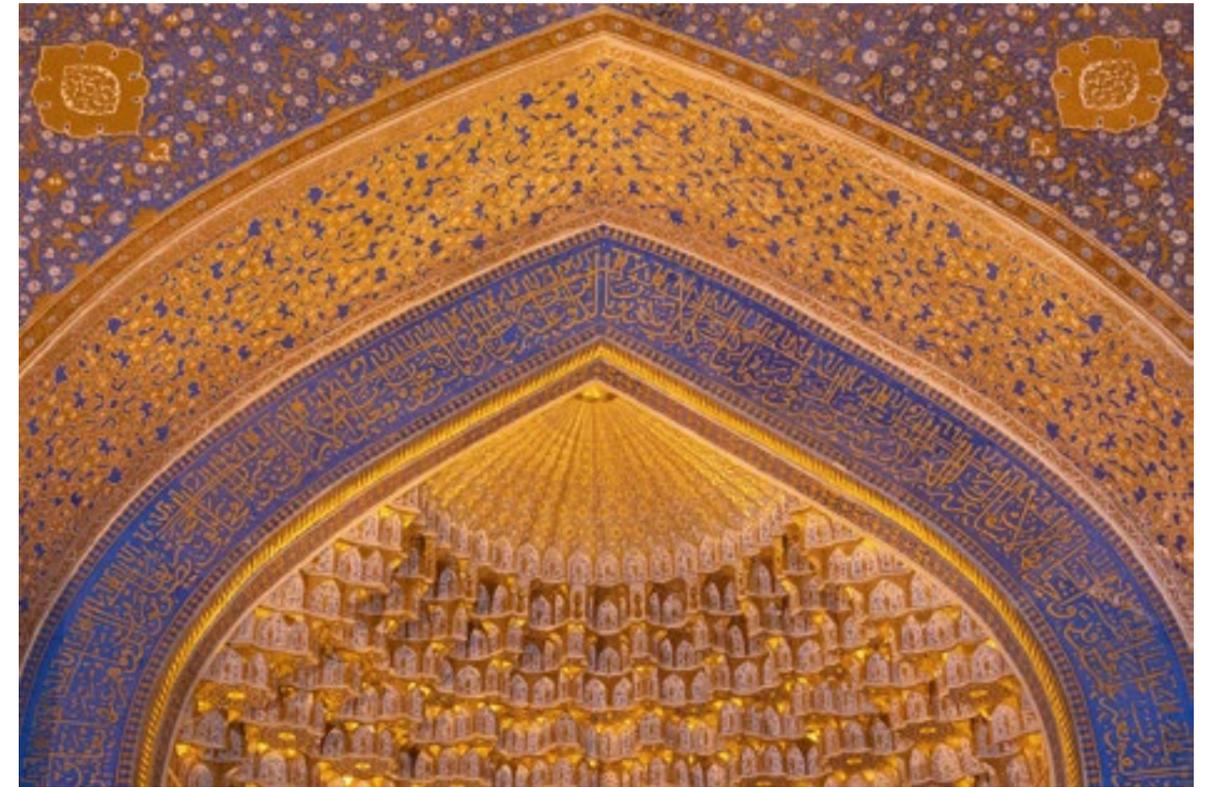
Historical city of Bukhara, Uzbekistan

Samarkand is now a large and modern city. However, in proximity to the historical sites it retains all the exoticism that comes from its extraordinary past as one of the most important crossroads on the Silk Road. I would go back to Samarkand just for the sake of taking photos, especially the main square, which is one of the most remarkable squares I have seen. Bukhara (previous spread) is much smaller but just as impressive and a not-to-miss destination.

Daniele Ehrlich



Samarkand and its artistic heritage, Uzbekistan





Son Kul lake, Kyrgyzstan



Hotel in Son Kul, Kyrgyzstan



religious rites
Ralf Steinberger

*Colourful Mayan cemetery in Chichicastenango, Guatemala (2017).
Families repaint the tombs once a year before All Saints Day (1 or 2 November).
Families then visit the graves, eat there, talk to the ancestors, give sacrifices to the dead.*

travel

photographing religious rites

I am lucky that I can say that I have travelled quite a bit in my life, including rough and tumble. The feeling I brought back from these trips is that we live in a wonderful world full of magnificent colours, smells and variety. I LOVE IT! Traveling and photography are a wonderful combination. It feels like both photography and travelling get a purpose and you get a concrete outcome, even if that only means showing to your friends what this foreign place looks like.

Some of the most intense moments I have had while traveling was when I experienced strong religious or other cultural rites: Guatemalan people speaking aloud to their dead ancestors or eating with them at the cemetery; a young lady in Naples (Italy) making an offering to a pile of skulls; freshly circumcised boys in Mali celebrating on the side of the road; people kissing icons in Christian orthodox churches; Catholics praying to saints or lighting a candle.



Maya people talking aloud to their ancestors at the cemetery in Chichicastenango, Guatemala (2017).



Lady bringing presents to the dead at Fontanelle Cemetery in Naples, Italy (2015). In exchange for the gifts, the dead should help our dead ancestors and, after we die, help us.



Freshly circumcised boys celebrating on the side of the road in Ségou province, Mali (2009).



Holy Man (Sadhu, Sanyasi) in Udaipur, Rajasthan, India (2008).



Colour festival Holi. Udaipur, Rajasthan, India (2008).

As an atheist, I always see such deep expressions of faith with a certain distance, but I feel respect and awe. Religious beliefs and rites have developed over centuries and millennia, motivated by certain human needs such as wanting to get over grief or seeking a purpose in one's existence. Is it acceptable to take photos of people while practising their rites, one may ask. Opinions differ a lot regarding this issue. For me, it is like with any other type of street photography: it is the intention that counts. It is unkind to look down at people or wanting to ridicule them. However, a non-judgemental depiction of how other people feel and live is fair and may even raise empathy and understanding for foreign people and cultures.

With my photos, I intend to give non-judgemental impressions of other people's living environments and I would be happy if they encourage some viewers to see themselves and other people in a new light. In any case, I feel that taking photos while travelling is a great opportunity to witness our globe's varied cultures and to get closer to the people than we would do as common travellers.

Ralf Steinberger



Jewish man praying at the Western Wall (Wailing Wall) in Jerusalem, Israel (2018)



Disguised Cameroonian children go from door to door on 1 January to request a present, Limbe (2006)



Cemetery at the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, Israel (2019).

exploration

Axolotl the water monster

Some time ago, I visited an aquarium-museum in Mexico where I first saw the Axolotl (*Ambystoma mexicanum*), a fascinating amphibian native to the lakes of the Mexican highlands. Its name comes from the Nahuatl language formed by the words: Xólotl, monster and Atl, water, and it means “water monster”. It is critically endangered in the wild because of the pollution and urban sprawl that threaten its habitat in the Mexican Basin. The few specimens that remain in nature are found in Lake Xochimilco and are being protected under Mexican environmental regulations.

I was delighted when I saw the axolotl through the glass of the fish tank. This cute little monster at first glance looks like a tadpole, because of the fin on its back that extends from the nape of the neck to the tip of its long tail. Its legs have fine pointed toes, four on the front and five on the back. The locks that protrude on both sides of the head are not decorative, but external gills through which they breathe; water enters through the mouth and is forced to escape through gill slits where the oxygen is captured. Its face is of a captivating delicacy: the small round eyes and the apparent permanent smile aroused in me a great tenderness. Despite their enormous guts, from time to time, they suddenly rise to the surface



at high speed to take a deep breath. The Axolotl can come to the surface without problems and even walk out of the water for a short time, since in addition to the gills, it can capture oxygen through the skin, mouth and lungs. In the hatchery, they had axolotls of various colours. Most of them were black or brown with spots, but they also had albinos and golden ones. They are carnivorous and feed on insects and other little animals. They measure from 20 to 30 cm and can live up to 15 years.

The secret of its eternal youth

The Axolotl suffers an incomplete metamorphosis that gives it the ability to stay young throughout its life. Interestingly, it is the only species in the world that has the ability to reproduce in its larval state without reaching the adult stage. This process of the maturation of reproductive organs while delaying development of body structures is known as neoteny; because of this, axolotls remain young forever. This does not mean that they are immortal, but that they retain their youthful appearance and their ability to live in the water for the rest of their existence. Only in exceptional cases, due to stress or prolonged drought, some axolotl specimens can transition to their adult phase, becoming Mexican salamanders, but they will no longer be able to return to the water. Based on research, scientists discovered that their permanent youthful appearance is due to thyroid dysfunction that blocks their metamorphosis.

The Axolotl and its regenerative power

The Axolotl has an amazing ability to regenerate its limbs in case of damage or loss. And not only this; it can also regenerate its skin, main organs and, incredibly, part of its brain. Its larval phase favours the recovery of damaged tissues. As long as its head is not cut off, axolotls can heal any part of their body, including a badly damaged spine, and get it to work like it did before the damage. Other animals do not possess this impressive recovery ability. For this reason, Axolotl is very attractive for the scientists investigating the biochemical and molecular processes involved in its regeneration mechanism. In fact, scientists have already sequenced its entire genome to study and try to mimic tissue regeneration in humans.

From Aztec mythology to pop culture

The Axolotl was part of the Aztec mythology, in which it was associated with Xólotl, god of fire and darkness being depicted as a dog like creature. The legend says Xólotl got mixed up in the political affairs of the other gods. Fearing that he would be banished or lose his life, he decided to transform himself into an Axolotl to elude capture. The ancient Aztecs believed that, due to the Axolotl's strange look and



regenerative powers, they were the manifestation of the god Xólotl and were a gift of food.

The Axolotl was also taken as the basis for the design of one of the strange creatures that are part of the Japanese cartoon series: Pokémon. In the cinema, the Oscar-winning film *The Shape of Water* is about a humanoid-amphibian creature captured for military scientific research. Although the story states that the creature was found in the Amazon, the characteristic of healing its wounds quickly and its physical appearance are those of a Mexican Axolotl.

Emilio Mendoza





Palermo
Gabi Breitenbach

reportage

Palermo perfect destination for photography

We visited Sicily in 2019 during Christmas holidays, travelled quite a lot, going from one town to the other in an almost daily rhythm. We saw numerous baroque churches, markets, shops, had wonderful food and even more wonderful wine.

One of the places that definitely stood out to me during this time was the old part of Palermo with its markets, incredibly decorated churches, wayside shrines and fantastic street art.

We spent a total of 5 days in Palermo strolling around all day and night and just couldn't get enough of the city's vibrancy and culture. Life is largely lived outdoors here, making the streets full of surprises.

I was particularly fascinated by the market Ballarò, that feels like being in an African souk rather than in downtown Palermo. Unlike ancient markets in other cities, it is still popular and lively. Despite the spread of large shopping centres, it is still the best place to buy food in the city. Among the stalls and shops of Ballarò you can buy meat, fresh fish, fruit and vegetables and even cheeses, typical products, sweets at km 0, coming directly from the Palermo countryside.







Another interesting aspect is the variety of street art that often reflects typical Sicilian topics as for example the Godfather movies, immigration or religion and Catholic shrines which can be found everywhere in Palermo. They are often decorated with the preferred

saint(s), photos of late family members, plastic flowers and fairy lights. Churches in that area of Palermo seem to understate their real beauty by showing a rather plain face on the outside. The Jesuit church of Gesù close to the



Ballarò market is a fine example of Sicilian baroque and leaves you breathless and amazed by its beautiful marble decorations and figures on the inside. For me it is exactly that mixture of interesting elements - did I mention the good food - that makes Palermo a

great destination for photographers. It allows you to take street, architecture, food and people pictures all in one and experience a lively and vibrant city, which was founded about 2700 years ago.

Gabi Breitenbach





FotoCineClub

FCC

The FotoCineClub (FCC) is a COPAS-supported club at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) in Ispra, Italy. We invite all interested persons to join our activities and meetings, as well as our email distribution list and the WhatsApp group. Paying members can additionally participate in group decisions, use the club's equipment including our photo studio, receive photo journals and participate in courses (additional course fees apply). Membership fee for the year 2021 is 30 Euro.

committee: Gabi Breitenbach (president); Rudolf Hummel (vice-president); Sara Flisi (treasurer); Ralf Steinberger (secretary); Kevin Douglas, Eva Grammatikaki, Rosana Grecchi, Katja Neugebauer, Ute Stips (consiglieri).

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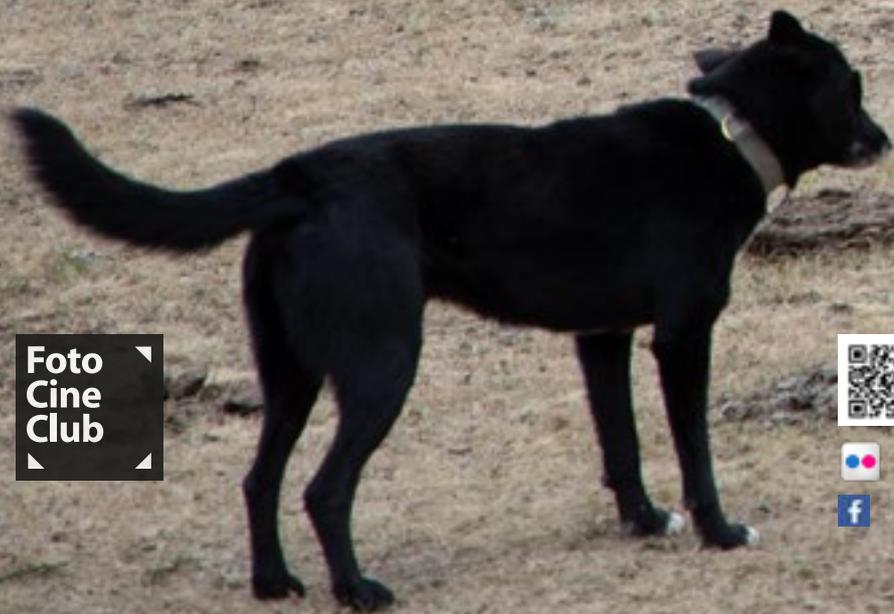
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